

their character. These men are outstanding military heroes who gave so much to this Nation and set such an outstanding example for future generations of aviators. Several of them are in the pictures produced there each year hanging in my office.

These African American men, determined to do their part to serve their Nation during World War II, enlisted to serve their Nation at a time when segregation limited opportunities. But they were given a chance to excel in the military. During World War II, they completed 15,500 missions, destroyed over 260 enemy aircraft, sank one enemy destroyer, and demolished numerous enemy installations. They destroyed more than 100 German aircraft while building an unprecedented record of flying with more than 200 bomber escort missions—all without the loss of a bomber. That is a huge feat.

Every bit as important, they set an example for millions of Americans of every color, encouraging others to pursue careers in air and space technology. It is time this Nation give this distinguished group of aviators the credit and honor they deserve. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution recognizing these fine men and their achievements.

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EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS  
THAT DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
CONTINUE TO EXERCISE ITS AUTHORITY  
SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES OF BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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SPEECH OF

**HON. J. GRESHAM BARRETT**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 9, 2005*

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Boy Scouts of America and their right to congregate in facilities such as military bases. It has been a long tradition within the organization that the Scouts work hand in hand with local communities which includes cooperation with agencies such as the Armed Forces. The Boy Scouts of America have been promoting courage, self-reliance, and family virtues throughout this country for almost a century.

The Boy Scouts have always held a special place in my heart because in 1951, my father started Boy Scout Troup 108—the first Boy Scout organization in Westminster, SC. As a matter of fact, one of the first service projects of this troop was to raise the American Flag over the Westminster Post Office. We see Boy Scout troops perform similar patriotic acts throughout the country yet they are denied the right to come together on our military bases. That just doesn't make sense.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in showing support for an organization that has done countless good deeds in each of our communities and pass H. Con. Res. 6.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MRS.  
DELOIS JACKSON WILKINSON

**HON. JIM COOPER**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 10, 2005*

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, as we observe Black History month, I rise today to celebrate the remarkable life of Mrs. DeLois Jackson Wilkinson of Nashville, Tennessee. Mrs. Wilkinson was a physical therapist, school board member and local community activist. Often referred to as "Miss Civil Rights," she was among the many brave leaders who participated in the civil rights movement to make this country a better place not only for black Americans, but for all citizens. When she passed away on Saturday, January 29, 2004 at the age of 80, our country lost a dedicated advocate and a dear friend.

Mrs. Wilkinson's energy, passion, and perseverance endeared her to all. Born in Fayette County, Tennessee in 1924, Mrs. Wilkinson was one of eight children. She attended Lemoine College in Memphis and graduated from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. She moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where she became a physical therapist at Meharry Medical College. She and her husband, Fred Wilkinson, had five children whom they raised during the tumultuous civil rights era and whom they struggled to protect from the harsh realities of life in the South.

Frustrated by the inequalities of segregation, Mrs. Wilkinson worked hard to ensure that she, her children and other black Americans would some day experience the joys of true freedom. She often told a story about going to a downtown department store in Nashville with her young son and passing a restaurant with a play area set up for children. Her son desperately wanted to go in, but to shield him from the harsh truth that he was not allowed, she simply told him that they were in too much of a rush. Mrs. Wilkinson recalled years later that she hated having to lie to her son. Fueled by her desire for equal rights, she helped organize sit-in demonstrations at downtown Nashville lunch counters, and in 1963 and 1983, she participated in the historic civil rights marches on Washington, DC.

As a member of the Board of Education in Nashville, Mrs. Wilkinson advocated for quality education for all children. When asked to serve as a board member, she said that the question of "why Johnny can't read needs to be answered." Because "Johnny does not teach himself," she stressed the responsibility of the school board, administration and teachers to ensure that "Johnny" and others had access to a proper education.

A tireless advocate, Mrs. Wilkinson devoted a lifetime to improving the lives of others. As we celebrate Black History Month, who better to recognize than Mrs. Wilkinson—an extraordinary Nashvillian who provided energy and a sense of purpose to her community, compassion and hope to the poor and sick, and promise for a better future to the repressed.

On behalf of the fifth district of Tennessee, I send my deepest condolences to Mrs. Wilkinson's family and loved ones. May we all take to heart the philosophy she lived by—that "every person should contribute positively during their lifetime to the betterment and spiritual life on earth."

TRIBUTE TO JERRY LEONE ON  
HER RETIREMENT FROM THE  
PUBLIC POWER COUNCIL

**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 10, 2005*

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure it comes as no surprise to my colleagues that I have a special appreciation for those that are unafraid to speak their mind, expose absurd policies for what they are, and bluntly and forcefully announce when the emperor has no clothes.

It is with mixed feelings, therefore, that I speak to my colleagues today on the upcoming retirement of Jerry Leone from the helm of the Public Power Council—the regional organization representing the interests of the customers of the Bonneville Power Administration.

Jerry is one of those rare individuals willing to provide unvarnished opinions. But she has more than the ability to distill complex issues into clear and unvarnished analysis and critique. Jerry provides clear insights, bold ideas and an uncanny ability to herd the often disparate interests within public power.

Jerry has been at the helm of PPC for more than a decade, guiding the region's public power systems through numerous challenges, including treatment of the region's aluminum plants, skyrocketing electricity rates, the West Coast energy crisis, formation of a Regional Transmission Organization, ESA listings and a review of the future of Bonneville. Public power, the region and the Northwest delegation are fortunate to have had the benefit of Jerry's insights and efforts throughout this effort.

Jerry is not merely a public power icon. She's a lawyer, a wannabe lineman, a retired member of the Coast Guard Reserves, an accordion player, and a journalistic wit.

I wish her the best in her retirement and thank her for her advocacy and tenacity expressed through numerous wry comments, witty insights and cogent observations.

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VETERANS SELF-EMPLOYMENT  
ACT OF 2005

**HON. RICHARD H. BAKER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 10, 2005*

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Veterans Self-Employment Act," legislation to establish a five-year pilot program that allows our Nation's servicemembers, veterans, national guardsman, reservists, and qualified others to use part of their VA educational assistance programs to defray legitimate training costs associated with obtaining a business franchise.

Mr. Speaker, franchising is an enormous component of the United States economy. According to a study conducted by International Franchise Association Educational Foundation, nearly 760,000 franchised businesses generate jobs for more than 18 million Americans annually, comprising nearly 14 percent of the Nation's private-sector employment and accounting for \$1.53 trillion in economic output. Over 75 industries utilize the franchise model